

MEETING THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF THE AFP

By Superintendent John Spurling, OIC Operations Training Branch

SKILLS training has assumed a vital role in the new approach to AFP training. It's a move that many may regard as radical, but one designed to meet the unique needs of the AFP.

The new skills concept affects investigators, intelligence operatives, VIP Protection specialists ... even the systems for driver training, survival techniques, firearm training, physical training and radar and amphetamine training.

The previous training program is now considered to be too generalist and 'traditional' for the AFP's needs. Too little and too general for specific areas and covering too many topics which were never put to use, is the major criticism.

The new program is planned to be in operation by the beginning of next year.

Basically, the investigator training concept is expected to retain the three phases of training — introduction to investigation techniques, an on-the-job training period and intensive training in one of the specialties.

The first phase becomes Stage 4 training and replaces Stage 1 of the former detective development program with a four weeks course including a segment on intelligence.

It begins immediately after recruit training and is designed to produce 'apprentices' rather than investigators. In other words, members capable of working with an experienced detective in a support role.

The on-the-job phase is likely to last two years, during which the trainee is assigned to work with designated detectives and will be involved in actual investigations. Regional training officers will monitor their progress, paying particular attention to the trainee's weaknesses or deficiencies shown during training in Stages 1 to 4.

Phase 3 begins with core training which all trainees must complete before moving into specialist studies. Commanders previously will have nominated investigation areas to which individual members will be deployed and they then will receive appropriate training.



• Superintendent Spurling.

Specialist courses for investigators will be:

- Community investigations — for detectives in the general investigations area in Canberra and will include the more serious offences against persons and property.
- Narcotics investigations — covering Customs Act offences, telephone intercept and listening devices, assets seizure, and narcotics investigations.
- Fraud investigations — dealing with fraud offences possibly some basic accounting procedures, corporate structures, banking procedures and 'laundering' of money.



The program allows for detectives who have served for a period — say two years — in one specialty to be trained in another and be deployed to the second specialty after finishing training. Strict selection procedures will be applied to prevent the courses being used to improve promotion prospects. The investigator courses are expected to be conducted in the regions eventually.

Agreement also has been reached on aspects of the Intelligence training concept. Specialist training in intelligence duties and techniques probably will be covered in the one-week segment allocated in Stage 4 training.

The need for analyst training has been clearly demonstrated, and a package on this topic is to be prepared as a 'stand alone' course for both police and civilian employees in the intelligence area.

Surveillance training also is to be developed as a 'stand alone' training package, and probably will cover photographic and electronic equipment, evidence as it applies to material gathered by these means, documentation, practice and procedures. Method of teaching will be by theory, with some practical aspects, and driver training in Canberra before moving the course to either Sydney or Melbourne for practical exercises.

A decision on the approach to practice and procedures will be made after a job analysis study is undertaken by the Detective Training School, Training Standards and Development Staff and AFP management.

Courses in Intelligence training again will be 'packaged' so they can be conducted in the regions.

A new weapons training scheme will be introduced during 1986 to ensure all recruits are trained and qualified in the use of the standard issue handgun. Qualifying tests will be conducted every six months by region firearm trainers.

Initial qualifying training for all weapons used in specialist areas will be part of the courses for the particular specialist groups. For instance, VIPP courses will include a course of instruct-

ion in the weapons on issue to that particular squad; Special Operations Team members will receive similar training in their weapons during their initial course.

Besides regular tests there will be frequent practice shoots for members such as marksmen.

The driver training and testing system for the future will ensure that all recruits will be tested for their suitability to drive in a normal non-response role. If they fail, they will be returned early from Stage 2 for further training.

Recruits in A.C.T. regions who will be

driving response vehicles fitted with signs and warning devices will be trained during Stage 2 and issued with a permit. Those who fail will be retrained when possible.

Specialist driving courses again will be a part of the specialist training.

A proposed physical training competence scheme, modelled on the New Zealand Police Force system has been proposed. Members will need to pass an initial test for appointment, while a different type of test would be applied during recruit training and then every 18 months, with regular medical examinations. Different results would apply at

the various age levels. The scheme is not designed to produce athletes, but to regularly test the medical and physical competence of members to undertake police duties.

Survival training, a recent addition to specialist training, will aim at teaching members basic techniques in the use of issue equipment such as batons and handcuffs, how to react to chemical incapacitants, the use of restraining holds, and how to approach a vehicle.

Eventually, this training will be expanded to cover specialist groups who may be called on to use special purpose equipment.

SPECIALIST SKILLS



• Trevor Watkins.



• Tony Battaini.

THE Training Department now has two public servant specialists in its advisory team — a senior psychologist and a training and education officer.

They are Trevor Watkins, 45, Training and Education Advisor, who has a teaching and Service background, and Tony Battaini, 32, who has worked in the Commonwealth Employment Service and Public Service staff counselling areas.

"My experience in the education field began as a school-teacher, at both primary and secondary school levels, after I graduated from Queensland Teachers' College in 1959," Trevor said.

In 1968, he obtained a commission in the RAAF and over the next 17 years, gained wide experience in that Service's specialist education and counselling units.

He spent two years in the UK at the RAF's School of Education where he was a member of a specialist team delivering wide-ranging instruction to NATO air

forces and the RAF.

"I see my role as an evolving one, but obviously I hope my experience will be able to influence training policy at all levels," he said. "For example, I already have had an input into the philosophy behind the new approach to detective training.

"Right now, a priority task is to write or edit a training manual on the AFP's training doctrines. This manual will be a detailed policy document and the intention is to issue it in parts progressively over the next few months.

"I see them as fundamental to any Training Department's activities."

Tony Battaini said it was now well established that psychologists had an important role to play in the development of training policy and philosophy.

After graduating from Melbourne's Chisholm Institute with a BA (psychology major) and later returning to complete a Graduate Diploma in Applied Psychology, Tony worked initially as a

CES selection officer and later with its specialist Professional Employment Office and career counselling service.

He also worked with the Department of Aviation in its Personnel Policy and Projects Branch, overseeing staff assistance and staff counselling services across Australia as well as completing a three-month secondment term with the Public Service Board's Senior Executive Staffing Unit.

Already Tony has been able to assist in the development of the new Behavioural Studies Modules now incorporated in the new guidelines for recruit training.

"Here the fundamental aim is to develop skills for dealing with people and to get recruits to examine their attitudes to leadership and to the various types of people with whom they will come in contact — the aged, the disabled, Aborigines, migrants ... the whole mix of people who collectively we call society," he said.